



ALASKA TRAILS

Building Partnerships,
Building Trails

**“Unclogging the Federal
Outdoor Recreation Pipelines”**

Brief Presentation & Discussion

Board of Forestry

Dec 8, 2020





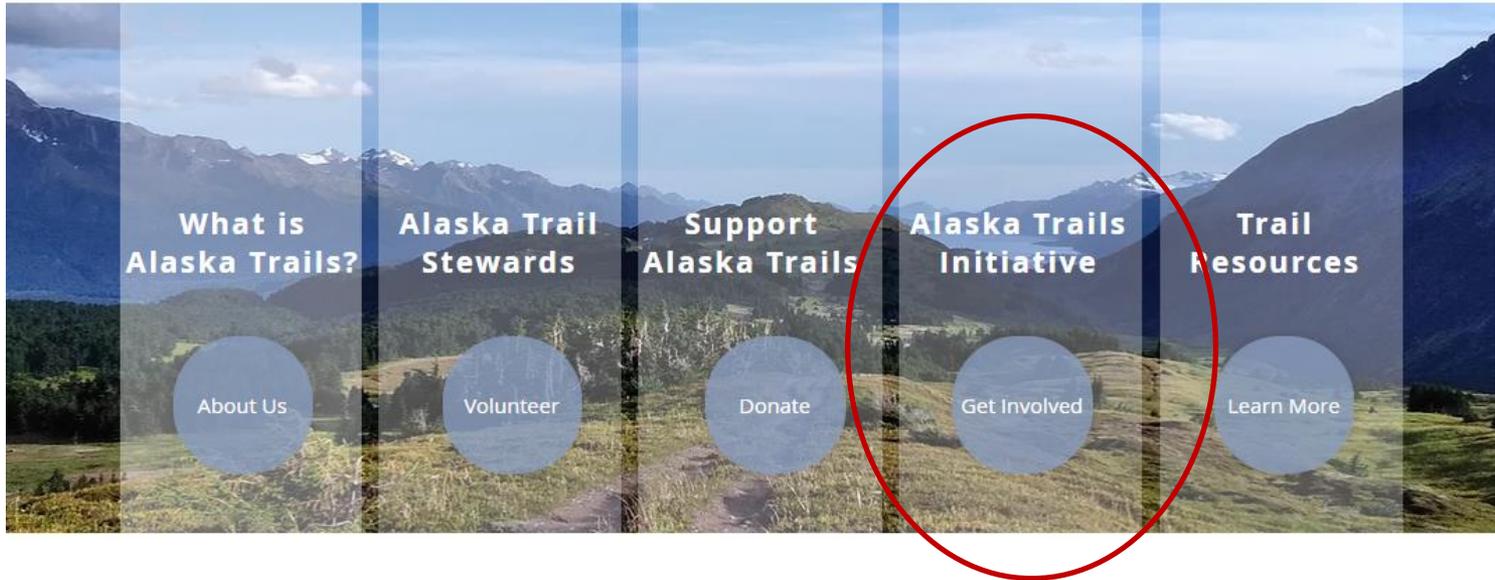
ALASKA TRAIL STEWARDS

ALASKA TRAILS INITIATIVE

EVENTS

ABOUT

DONATE



<https://www.alaska-trails.org/>

Investment Strategy Extracts – Statewide Policies

1. Invest Strategically for Greatest Impact

- Increase marketing and infrastructure to grow Fall/Winter/Spring activities
- Outdoor adventure for the “*Missing Middle*”; huts, trail signs and maps, food, comfort
- World class “long trails”
- Gateway towns/ “Trail Towns”
- “Must See” high volume outdoor recreation destinations; quiet places with little use....

2. Spread the Benefits - All Regions, All Kinds of Trail-based Activities

- Bigger pie – for all sectors: independents, cruise, residents

3. Stabilize and Expand Resources for Trails & Outdoor Recreation

- **Maximum use & leverage of Federal Outdoor Recreation funds**
- Agency funding for operations and maintenance; partnerships to build and maintain trails
- Solving the “Alaska Disconnect”

4. Streamline Authorizations for Use of Public land –regulatory relief

- Improved, faster process for reserving trails on State general use land

5. Improve Marketing and User Information (take more advantage of what we have)

6. Political Power and Leadership

- New partners; state-scale Outdoor Recreation leadership

7. Relentlessly Make The Case For All The Benefits Of Trails

- better data, focused on economic & health impacts, visitors and residents

8. Include outdoor recreation in “working landscapes” – e.g., on State Forests

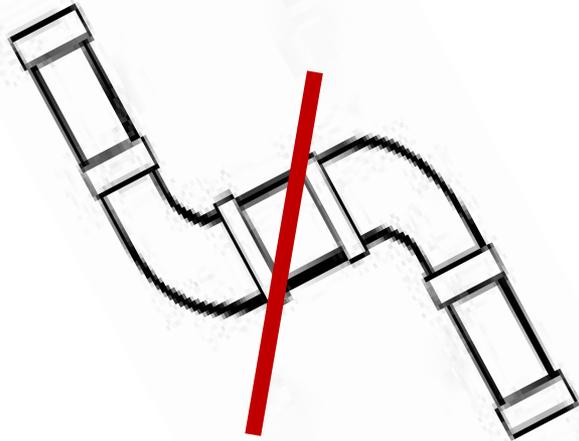
9. Actively Guide Growth Through Management and Stewardship

“Unclogging the Federal Outdoor Recreation \$ Pipelines”

Focus on: Land Water Conservation Fund

LWCF Basics

- Federal LWCF delivered over \$40 M for 350 Alaska outdoor recreation projects since 1965.
- LWCF is administered in Alaska by Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation (federal admin by NPS).
- Requires a 50-50 non-federal match – **a one-to-one reimbursable federal subsidy!**
- Available to State & local governments, to tribes.
- Can be used for a) outdoor rec. infrastructure, b) acquisition of parks and open space (*for example, Campbell Ck Greenbelt in Anchorage*)



“Unclogging the Federal Outdoor Recreation \$ Pipelines”

Land Water Conservation Fund

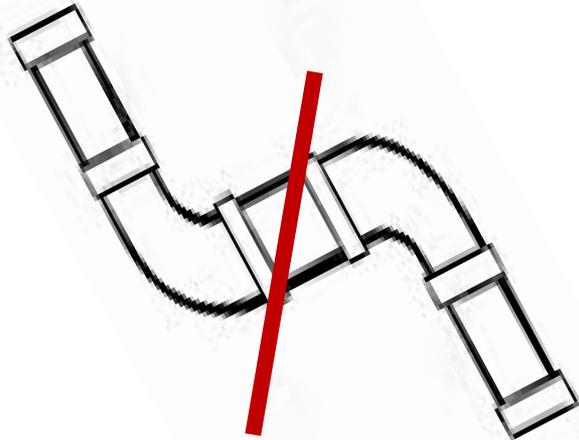
What’s at Stake

Alaska’s *potential* allocation:

- FFY 2018 - \$650,000
- FFY 2019 - \$1,549,000
- FFY 2020 - \$1,903,000

With passage of Great American Outdoors Act fall 2020:

- FFY 2021 (projected) \$3.5M



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Land Water Conservation Fund

What’s Going On

Alaska’s potential allocation:

- ~~FFY 2018 - \$650,000 + \$650,000 in hand match~~
\$1.3M lost due to lack of \$75,000 to cover cost of State admin position

State has yet to accept receipt authority* for

- FFY 2019 - \$1,549,000
- FFY 2020 - \$1,903,000
- FFY 2021 (projected) \$3,500,000

If we don’t address problems now, we’re at risk of loosing 2019-20 funds, and be even BIGGER losers when GAOA takes effect in FFY 2021

* Only state in the nation to leave this money on the table



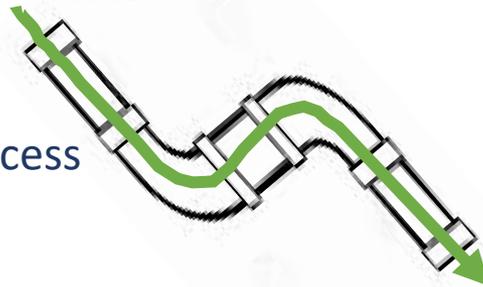
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LWCF Strategies & Solutions

Work is in progress by Alaska Trails, key State Legislators, AK DOPOR, Congressional delegation, Alaska Outdoor Alliance:

Federal Solutions

- Reduce matching requirement
- Allow LWCF \$ to cover in-state Admin costs
- Extend time frame
- Improve & simplify process



And one more thing.. SCORP

- By the end of 2021 Alaska must update the *State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*
- SCORP is required for continued receipt of LWCF, RTP, other fed funds
- Alaska needs to secure LWCF \$ and matching contributions to produce a quality, partner-driven, regionally-based plan

In-State Solutions

Work with Legislature & Governor:

- Secure admin cost (+/- 10% of grant)
- Secure State match (+/- 1/2 of total)
- Ensure local govns/tribes have chance to match LWCF \$, even if State doesn't

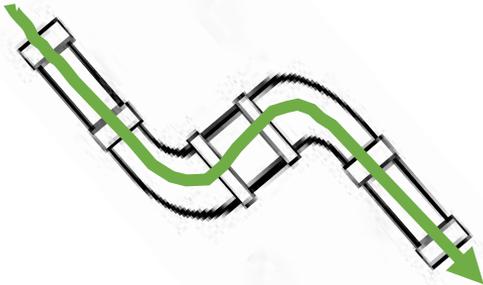
Work with all Stakeholders:

- Options to reduce admin costs?
- Options to consolidate processing of all federal outdoor recreation grants?
- Options to improve, simplify process?
- New sources of matching funds?

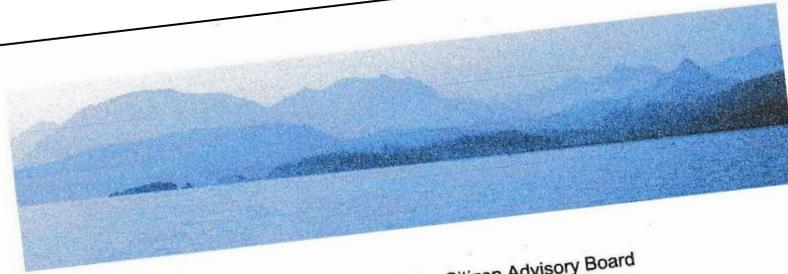
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LWCF Action Plan

1. **Share the LWCF story**, first with the Governor and legislators, then with the general public.
2. Work for **reforms** at the federal level.
3. **Make the case** directly to AK Legislature & Governor: please secure administrative costs and state’s share of matching funds in 2021 budget - **“Don’t leave money on the table!”**
4. As quickly as possible, **hire DOPOR admin staff**, so Alaska can get “receipt authority” for LWCF \$, and have at least the chance to secure required match.
5. Work to **simplify, improve and reduce costs** to run the LWCF & other federal outdoor recreation programs.



Sample LWCF letter from Kachemak Bay Parks CAB



Kachemak Bay State Parks Citizen Advisory Board
95 Sterling Hwy, Suite 2
Homer, Alaska 99603

Date 11-16 -2020

To,

Governor Mike Dunleavy
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

The Great American Outdoor Act, (GAOA) which provides funding for recreational programs nationwide was passed by the last Congress. This act provided match funding to states and non-governmental organizations, (NGOs) through a process that is managed by a state administrator. The GAOA was passed by the United States Congress, signed by the President, and activated into Public Law in August of 2020. This bipartisan act makes crucially needed State Park funding available through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

It has come to the attention of the Kachemak Bay Citizens Advisory Board that the State of Alaska does not at this time, have "receipt authority", making it impossible for us to obtain available, desperately needed, federal funding. This appears to be for several reasons:

- The State of Alaska does not have the budget to provide for any "Match Funding".
- There is at present, no funds to provide for a state administrator of Land and Water Conservation fund grant proposals.

When much of our political system is buckling under the weight of political polarization, this piece of legislation with significant cost implications managed to pass both the House and the Senate on such a broad bipartisan basis, if enacted here, it has the potential to restore much needed funding for Alaska State Parks.

As the public turns to activities that provide some safe avenue to recreate, State Parks is becoming all the more important to Alaskans.

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Alaska State Representative
Sara Vance
Representative.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov

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at present estimates a 60

stituents. Getting outdoors
our parklands and call on
the financial support. We
order to obtain these

ourism have been lost. The
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year to year. Each
aska State Parks with a
le are working diligently to
history by failing to provide

For more info and ways to help

Trails Investment Strategy Website

- See sample DOPOR letter
- Appendix A. Summary of Federal and State funding opportunities

<https://www.alaska-trails.org/trails-investment-strategy>

And stay in touch:

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